

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Stephen J. Benkovic, et al. )  
)  
For: METHODS FOR NUCLEIC )  
ACID MANIPULATION )  
)  
Serial No.: NOT YET ASSIGNED )  
)  
Filed: March 31, 2004 )  
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Docket No. 7418/91839 )

Mail Stop Patent Application  
Hon. Commissioner for Patents  
P. O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

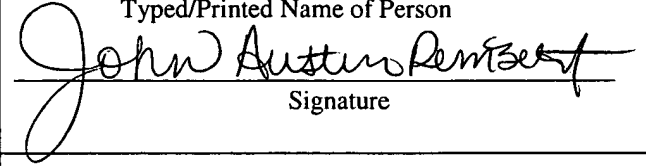
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**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

**Amendments to the Specification** begin on page 2 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims, which begin on page 3 of this paper.

**Remarks** being on page 4 of this paper.